

OLT ANALYSIS AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS: A CROSS-SECTIONAL STUDY IN PAKISTANI SETTING

Zahid Hussain¹, Ghulam Yaseen², Muhammad Irfan Ahmed³

¹Ph.D. Scholar (Sociology), University of Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan, ²MPhil (Sociology), Riphah International University, Faisalabad, Pakistan

³Ph.D. Scholar (Pak Study), Bahauddin Zakariya University, Multan, Pakistan

¹hdrzahid07@gmail.com, ²malik7810irfan@gmail.com

Article History: Received on 03th November, 2022, Revised on 07th December 2022, Published on 31th December 2022

Abstract

This study aimed to analyze the Online Learning Trials (OLT) in the context of the post-COVID-19 pandemic among multidisciplinary graduates and post-graduate students in Pakistan. An online cross-sectional survey was arranged using "Google Docs" among 128 graduate and 124 post-graduate multidisciplinary students taking online classes or having finished their online courses in their last semester. A self-reporting questionnaire, "Questionnaire for Predicting Online Learning Trials (OLT)/Achievement by Bernard, Brauer, Abrami, and Surkes (2004)", was used for an online survey. The study sample size was 252 students. A link to a web-based online survey page (Google Docs) was circulated through social media. After that, researchers used SPSS version 24 to conduct descriptive statistical analysis (frequencies and percentages) for the collected data. The study illuminates that Online Learning is less likely to produce the desired output because of a lack of internet access to students, signal issues, and a lack of a participatory approach.

Keywords: Online Learning Trials (OLT), COVID-19, Pakistan, Students, Cross-sectional

INTRODUCTION

No one expected that the COVID-19 epidemic would be turned into a multi-year pandemic when it first started. Corona disease, also known as COVID-19, was declared a worldwide public health emergency at the international level by a global health organization named the World Health Organization (WHO) on 30 January 2020. Furthermore, WHO declared a Corona-COVID-19 pandemic on 11 March 2020 (Heng & Sol, 2021). The major problem was not to contain it when it first started but to be able to maintain those precautions until the pandemic was under control. The advent of Corona Virus Disease 19 (COVID-19) as a pandemic drew attention from all corners of society. In response to COVID-19, Pakistani health and executive

authorities shut down all educational institutions across the country on 13 March 2020. The Higher Education Commission (HEC) issued directives to higher education institutions based on orders from the Pakistani government to prepare for online learning methods.

Further, reschedule and put ongoing exams on the online mod. Furthermore, provide regular online assistance to their students until the COVID-19 crisis is resolved (Adnan & Anwar, 2020). Working from home and taking classes from home has changed people's lives, allowing them to study and educate from the comfort of their homes. Institutions, corporations, business owners, and families responded cautiously following the COVID-19 pandemic's standard operating procedures. Different software began

to emerge worldwide to meet people's needs for effective communication in the newly diagnosed era. Because the institutions were closed for an unknown duration, the boards and educational authorities had to figure out how to run the curricula and, at the very least, stave off strategic defeat at the hands of time. To address these issues of the COVID-19 pandemic, Online Learning, discussion platforms, and session spaces were created using software Zoom, Google Classroom, Meet, Teams, Facebook Live, Youtube, Moodle, and a variety of other platforms were among them. Each of these platforms has its efficacy for online health professions education programs, and the study attempted to evaluate the effectiveness of Online Learning regardless of the means utilized. It should be highlighted that online education has been long overdue for adoption. The educationalists had no choice but to reform an online education plan that fit the worldwide system in light of the circumstances (Rafique et al., 2021).

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted students' routines, faculty members, and educational administration worldwide (Adnan & Anwar, 2020). Consequently, universities, other educational institutions, and administrative organizations worldwide were compelled to discontinue activities, allowing students to practice social isolation. Transferring from a traditional academic setting to Online Learning, on the other hand, many hurdles and issues currently stand in the way of a quick transition (Rafique et al., 2021). Because no one predicts when this pandemic will end, educational institutions worldwide have chosen to provide students with online class resources in all academic subjects using currently

available technological technologies (Mumtaz, Saqulain & Mumtaz, 2021). Traditional educational practices had previously been disrupted. The SARS coronavirus (SARS-CoV) and the 2009 H1N1 flu outbreak negatively influenced regular schooling activities in several nations worldwide (Rehman & Khan, 2021).

Similarly, Covid-19 caused academics to rethink their approach to face-to-face learning, prompting them to look into online learning as a possible option for filling the classroom with students for three to four months while decreasing the danger of infection before returning to normal activities (Agustina & Cheng, 2020). Even though hundreds of colleges offer online courses, there are two significant disadvantages. So, there is no information on the while using manner Online Learning methods (Khan, Z. H., & Abid, M. I., 2021). Second, depending on the vast range of learning goals that influence our instructional and educational priorities, our capacity to educate digitally in a successful manner will likely vary (Liguori & Winkler, 2020). In digitally evolved countries, Online Learning can be beneficial (Basilaia & Kavadze, 2020), which is why it is ineffective in Pakistan. However, in Pakistan, many educational institutions' learning, teaching, and administrative procedures are done by hand. The lack of fast, affordable, and stable internet connections stymies online leaching, particularly for those living in Pakistan's rural and marginalized areas (Ullah, Abaid, Ashraf & Ahmed., 2021). Students who utilize intelligent phones to approach the internet cannot benefit from Online Learning because much online contents are unavailable on smartphones. As the unanticipated shift to Online Learning became a barometer of organizational agility, some

academic institutions have focused primarily on transferring educational content to the digital environment rather than online teaching and delivery methodologies (Xiao et al., 2021). Organizational responsiveness and students' capacity to engage in digital learning were limited by inadequate internet connection and availability and a lack of cutting-edge technology. Another major drawback of online learning is the lack of proper teacher interaction. Any issues or comments about the online course content should be submitted to the appropriate course teacher, who should respond reasonably (Zheng, et al., 2021). Virtual classes will turn off those who want to learn through touch. Another significant drawback of online education is the lack of regular classroom socialization. Because students only communicate with one another online and never meet in person, the digital learning environment hinders the real-time exchange of ideas, knowledge, and information (Noor, Ali & Husnine, 2020).

The current situation is unusual; some feel it stems from crisis learning rather than regular digital learning environments (Pace, Pettit & Barker, 2020). Academic institutions desperately need curriculum revisions, and innovative teaching strategies and tactics should be prioritized (Toquero, 2020). Individuals gather in educational institutions, which serve as activity hubs. If educational programs were eliminated, many children and young people would miss out on social interaction-based activities essential for growth and learning. Closures of schools are a big issue that must be addressed, particularly for underprivileged children and young adults. While temporary closures of academic institutions due to

disasters are not uncommon, the international scale and speed had national instability are regrettably unprecedented. It may cause psychological anguish and misery (Harris et al., 2020). Following the closure of Pakistan's educational institutions, all higher education institutions had to provide online courses using Online Learning and management technologies (Sarwaret al, 2020). Most educational institutions were compelled to temporarily cease online sessions due to a learning and administrative capability shortage. Only a few of the country's most famous colleges were able to launch online courses right away. Most Pakistani research on online class adoption challenges and opportunities took place in a typical situation and context (Qazi et al., 2020).

Moreover, Online Learning was a non-compulsory method to amplify the learning and teaching cycle, and only a few national academic institutions used interactive technology. Distance learning has also been advantageous in prior Pakistani academic studies. According to Ali and Ahmad (2011), distance education has a satisfactory interaction between instructors and students and well-designed and up-to-date content. The dedicated and well-trained instructors have the necessary skills, knowledge, and well-dAloudd and up-to-date conteHarrisarable to traditional learning. In the past, all Pakistani higher education institutions were forced to employ remote learning approaches due to a lack of resources and finances.

According to Aloud & Harris, 2021), students' voices are crucial in this field; thus, future research should look at students' perspectives on online learning to discover what obstacles they face. More research is needed to

understand students' challenges better while Online Learning meets their educational goals (Basilaia & Kvavadze, 2020). However, no research has been done into online class Trials in the context of the Post-COVID-19

pandemic. So, this study aimed to assess Online Learning in the context of the Post-COVID-19 pandemic among multidisciplinary graduates and post-graduate students in Pakistan.

MATERIALS & METHODS

This study aimed at the Online Learning Trials analysis in the context of the Post-COVID-19 pandemic among multidisciplinary graduates and post-graduate students in Pakistan. So, an online cross-sectional survey was arranged from June to July 2022 using "Google Docs" to assess the students' Trials in Online Learning after COVID-19. The researchers sampled 128 graduate and 124 post-graduate multidisciplinary students taking online courses or finishing them in their last semester. The researchers excluded all the students who were at the undergraduate level to fulfill the aim of the study. A self-reporting questionnaire, "Questionnaire for Predicting Online Learning Trials/Achievement by Bernard, Brauer, Abrami, and Surkes (2004)", was used for an online survey. The study sample size was 252 students, where there were male (84) and female (168) students. A link to a web-based online survey page (Google Docs) was circulated through social media including Whatsapp and Facebook student groups. Then, online demographic and specific collected data were analyzed by descriptive statistical analysis through SPSS version-24 and demographic and specific responses were written in percentages and frequencies.

RESULTS

Table 1: Responses of students regarding demographic variables and Online Learning Trials

<i>Variables & Responses</i>	<i>Nos.</i>	<i>Percentages</i>
Program Level		
Graduate	128	50.8
Post-graduate	124	49.2

Gender		
Male	84	33.3
Female	168	66.7
Online Learning Trials		
Not afford the internet package	38	15.1
Signal issues	120	47.6
Not know to use of Smartphone	06	2.4
Not has Smartphone	30	11.9
Other	58	23.0
Know to use online media		
Agree	180	71.4
Somewhat Agree	68	27
Disagree	04	1.6
Comfort in using digital media		
Agree	154	49.2
Somewhat Agree	100	39.7
Disagree	28	11.1
Online & conventional classes are equal.		
Agree	29	11.4
Somewhat Agree	53	21.0
Disagree	170	67.6
Online Learning is more active.		
Agree	16	6.4
Somewhat Agree	41	16.2
Disagree	195	77.4

The entire syllabus is covered

through Online Learning.

Agree	46	18.3
Somewhat Agree	78	31.0
Disagree	128	50.8

Students of Online Learning can

quickly complete their

assignments and projects.

Agree	86	34.0
Somewhat Agree	58	23.1
Disagree	108	42.9

Face-to-face interaction is

beneficial b/w students &

teachers.

Agree	200	79.4
Somewhat Agree	30	11.9
Disagree	22	8.7

Graduate students were 50.8% of the sample, whereas post-graduate students were 49.2%. Most students were female, with 66.7%. The signal issue of the internet was a significant tribulation, with 47.6% out of other problems, and 1.6% of students did not know how to use online class media. Adnan & Anwar (2020), most graduate and post-graduate students who were polled expressed fears about Online Learning. Lack of internet facilities, inappropriate digital gadgets, and shortage of engagement and face-to-face contact with students and teachers were among the critical problems experienced by Pakistani higher education students. Students have faced a diverse learning experience due to the unexpected switch from conventional to Online Learning. Most students do not have quality or independent internet facilities, making

Online Learning easy. Internet access is denied to students from underdeveloped geographical areas of Pakistan, like former Gilgit-Baltistan Fata, Chitral, and Balochistan.

Most, 49.2% of students were uncomfortable with attending Online Learning, and just 11.1% of students were comfortable attending Online Learning. Online and conventional classes do not equal attendance; 67.6% of students agreed with this assumption. Most students also faced Trials of Online Learning in the form of uncompleted syllabi, less exciting ways of learning, and less interest in completing assignments and projects. Most respondents agreed 79.4% that Online Learning was the reason for more absenteeism, delayed feedback response, and ineffective learning. Due to a lack of resources at educational institutions, only a few universities would offer successful Online Learning during COVID-19. According to the report, students also worried about a lack of campus contact, group study challenges, and instructor response time. According to poll participants, traditional classes are more effective than Online Learning or distance education. As a result, it is plausible to argue that online lectures are ineffective in developing nations such as Pakistan, where most pupils cannot use the internet due to technical and financial constraints.

DISCUSSION

The world was shocked when the pandemic in Wuhan began, and the news traveled quickly enough to alarm everyone. Most importantly, it shattered the pride of every country's healthcare sector. It became a nightmare for the educator. Educationists were taken aback by a one-day abrupt leap into the uncharted realm of Online Learning

for various reasons. These were the driving forces behind this research, which resulted in a better understanding of how online courses affect students. Taking the tragic occurrences of COVID-19 and the hurdles it posed, educationists were left with little alternative but to update current methods to remodel education systems systematically. They eventually implemented strategies that yielded some encouraging results and some that needed to be tweaked. As a result, to address a dynamically changing online practice, multidisciplinary graduate and post-graduate students were asked to submit input to solve the restrictions.

The epidemic provided chances for those who wanted to pursue careers in technology. A change to the internet was judged necessary, and software and applications to meet this requirement emerged, eventually becoming a business for many. On the other hand, people found it difficult to embrace this change; these technical tools aided in easing the transition, making the online shift acceptable, and keeping up with the needs of the hour. On the one hand, Online Learning has enabled students to learn from home. It has also opened doors to a future in which Artificial Intelligence can be integrated into the educational system to engage and interact with students in ways that outperform traditional methods. The goal is to learn, so how about a fundamental riddle with new and creative aspects? To enhance learning, the Online Learning technique must be designed to be student-centered. Teachers can use learning analytics to collect and analyze student data and improve the design and delivery of instruction in online classrooms to make it more relevant to them (Chakraborty et al., 2021). Several

studies have proved the efficiency of Online Learning during a corona epidemic in various parts of the world. With the predominance of internet-based courses in higher education, it is vital to examine students' experiences to create an effective learning environment. According to this study, students with positive sentiments toward Online Learning had the supportive learner trait (Evans & Haase, 2001). The teaching methodology is highly connected to student learning, assessment, and satisfaction in Web-based courses. During Online Learning, professors use immediacy activities to bridge the social gap between themselves and their students (Deterding et al., 2011). Even more so, evaluation and assessment systems necessitate trial, application, and revisions to improve the feedback system.

This study also uses online evaluations or assessments to gauge students' satisfaction levels and collect comments. Online Learning is viewed as a good source of learning by many students who live in areas where internet access is available. Despite a few differences, Online Learning does not satisfy students, as witnessed by several higher education institutions (Paudel, 2021). Many elements have contributed to the success of Online Learning and should be investigated further. According to the findings of this study, most students agree that course design, learner motivation, time management, and online technology are seen as challenges (Chakraborty et al., 2021). Despite recent developments in Online Learning, developing nations continue to fall short of quality and require further assessment. It would require even more time and expertise to create some form of standards in online class education that is based on evidence.

CONCLUSION

The COVID-19 pandemic impacted academic institutions worldwide through traditional classes. Educational institutions had to choose Online Learning as an alternative to resuming education. Post-COVID-19 also presented the globe with unexpected social challenges. However, it also provided opportunities for developing, growing, and integrating Artificial Intelligence in our work, learning, education, healthcare, and other significant elements of our lives. The demand for Online Learning was instantly apparent, necessitating continuous improvement, innovation, and development in response to changing needs. At the same time, Online Learning was beneficial in preventing students' and teachers' health in the context COVID-19 pandemic. Most educational institutions still practice online courses but are not as successful as traditional classes. In underdeveloped nations like Pakistan, where most students cannot use the internet due to technical and financial limitations, online courses cannot provide the intended results. This study looked at the Trials of Online Learning, particularly for higher education students. According to the findings, most students do not have access to the internet, and 71.4 percent believe they are not adequately competent to utilize digital gadgets for Online Learning. However, 67.6 percent of respondents accept that online courses and traditional styles are not equal and that traditional types are more effective than Online Learning. As a result, a system that can manage teaching and learning using virtual techniques to reach goals and standards that compete with the natural world is urgently required. Furthermore, educational institutions must format an

excellent and beneficial lecture system and provide digital literacy training to students and faculty to attain better online class outcomes.

LIMITATIONS

When analyzing the findings of this study, it is vital to keep a few things in mind. The most significant limitation is that this is a cross-sectional rather than a longitudinal study. A longitudinal study of faculty and students from all classes' perceptions of the success of the online experience would be ideal. Second, this study included small sample size, and the selection was also limited to graduate and post-graduate levels.

Funding

The authors received no financial support or funding from any platform/organization, so there is no conflict of interest.

Acknowledgment & Contribution

Zahid Hussain: Idea commencement, write-up, data analysis

Dr. Muhammad Ishaq: Overall supervision, proofreading & compilation

Muhammad Irfan Ahmed: Data collection

REFERENCES

- Adnan, M., & Anwar, K. (2020). Online Learning amid the COVID-19 Pandemic: Students' Perspectives. *Online Submission*, 2(1), 45-51.
- Agustina, P. Z. R., & Cheng, T. H. (2020). What are students' perspectives on online learning amid the COVID-

- 19 pandemic? *Studies in Learning and Teaching*, 1(3), 133-139.
- Ali, A., & Ahmad, I. (2011). Critical factors for determining student satisfaction in distance learning courses: A study of Allama Iqbal Open University. *Contemporary Educational Technology*, 2(2), 118-134.
- Also, A. R., & Harris, A. A. (2021). The impact of the covid-19 pandemic on students' e-learning experience in Jordan. *Journal of Theoretical and Applied Electronic Commerce Research*, 16(5), 1404-1414.
- Basilaia, G., & Kvavadze, D. (2020). Transition to online education in schools during a SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic in Georgia. *Pedagogical Research*, 5(4).
- Bernard*, R. M., Brauer, A., Abrami, P. C., & Surkes, M. (2004). The development of a questionnaire for predicting online learning achievement. *Distance education*, 25(1), 31-47.
- Chakraborty, P., Mittal, P., Gupta, M. S., Yadav, S., & Arora, A. (2021). Opinion of students on online education during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Human Behavior and Emerging Technologies*, 3(3), 357-365.
- Deterding, S., Sicart, M., Nacke, L., O'Hara, K., & Dixon, D. (2011). Gamification. Using game-design elements in non-gaming contexts. *CHI'11 extended abstracts on human factors in computing systems* (pp. 2425-2428).
- Evans, J. R., & Haase, I. M. (2001). Online business education in the twenty-first century: analyzes potential target markets.
- Harris, B. N., McCarthy, P. C., Wright, A. M., Schutz, H., Boersma, K. S., Shepherd, S. L., ... & Ellington, R. M. (2020). From panic to pedagogy: Using online active learning to promote inclusive instruction in ecology and evolutionary biology courses and beyond. *Ecology and evolution*, 10(22), 12581-12612.
- Heng, K., & Sol, K. (2021). Online learning during COVID-19: Key challenges and suggestions to enhance effectiveness. *Cambodian Journal of Educational Research*, 1(1), 3-16.
- Liguori, E., & Winkler, C. (2020). From offline to online: Challenges and opportunities for entrepreneurship education following the COVID-19 pandemic. *Entrepreneurship Education and Pedagogy*, 3(4), 346-351.
- Mumtaz, N., Saqulain, G., & Mumtaz, N. (2021). Online academics in Pakistan: COVID-19 and beyond. *Pakistan Journal of Medical Sciences*, 37(1), 283.
- Noor, S., Ali, M. N., & Husnine, S. M. (2020). Performance of Online Classes in Lahore, Pakistan during Covid-19. *Performance Improvement*, 59(9), 33-42.
- Pace, C., Pettit, S. K., & Barker, K. S. (2020). Best practices in middle-level Quran teaching Strategies, tips, and resources amidst COVID-19. *Becoming: Journal of the Georgia Association for Middle Level Education*, 31(1), 2-13.
- Paul, P. (2021). Online education: Benefits, challenges and strategies during and after COVID-19 in higher education. *International Journal on Studies in Education*, 3(2), 70-85.

- Prior, D. D., Mazanov, J., Meacham, D., Heaslip, G., & Hanson, J. (2016). Attitude, digital literacy and self efficacy: Flow-on effects for online learning behavior. *The Internet and Higher Education, 29*, 91-97.
- Qazi, A., Naseer, K., Qazi, J., Salman, H., Naseem, U., Yang, S., ... & Gumaei, A. (2020). Conventional to online education during COVID-19 pandemic: Do develop and underdeveloped nations cope alike. *Children and Youth Services Review, 119*, 105582.
- Rafique, G. M., Mahmood, K., Warraich, N. F., & Rehman, S. U. (2021). Readiness for Online Learning during COVID-19 pandemic: A survey of Pakistani LIS students. *The Journal of Academic Librarianship, 47*(3), 102346.
- Rehman, A. U., & Khan, B. (2021). Challenges to online education in Pakistan during COVID-19 & the way forward. *Social Science Learning Education Journal, 6*(07), 503-512.
- Sarwar, H., Akhtar, H., Naeem, M. M., Khan, J. A., Waraich, K., Shabbir, S., ... & Khurshid, Z. (2020). Self-reported effectiveness of e-Learning classes during COVID-19 pandemic: A nation-wide survey of Pakistani undergraduate dentistry students. *European journal of dentistry, 14*(S 01), S34-S43.
- Tariq, W., Sabir, F. S., Maqsood, Z., & Bilal, M. Impact of Online Education System on Students Satisfaction at Pakistan Higher Education Institutions during COVID-19.
- Toquero, C. M. (2020). Challenges and opportunities for higher education amid the COVID-19 pandemic: The Philippine context. *Pedagogical Research, 5*(4).
- Ullah, Abaid, Mahmoona Ashraf, S. Ashraf, and S. Ahmed. "Challenges of Online Learning during the COVID-19 Pandemic Encountered by Students in Pakistan." *Journal of Pedagogical Sociology and Psychology 3*, no. 1(2021): 36-44.
- Xiao, X., Kanda, N., Chen, Z., Zhou, T., Yoshioka, T., Chen, S., ... & Gong, Y. (2021, June). Microsoft speaker diarization system for the voxceleb speaker recognition challenge 2020. In *ICASSP 2021-2021 IEEE International Conference on Acoustics, Speech and Signal Processing (ICASSP)*(pp. 5824-5828). IEEE.
- Zheng, Y., Wang, W., Zhong, Y., Wu, F., Zhu, Z., Tham, Y. C., ... & Liu, Y. (2021). A peer-to-peer live-streaming intervention for children during COVID-19 homeschooling to promote physical activity and reduce anxiety and eye strain: cluster randomized controlled trial. *Journal of medical Internet research, 23*(4), e243.